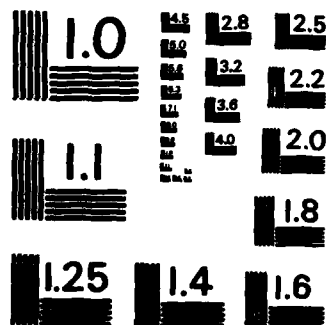


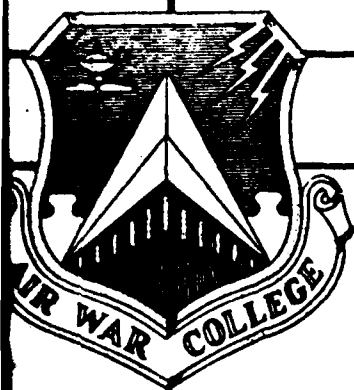
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AIR WAR COLLEGE

RESEARCH REPORT

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TAKING HOLD OF YOUR NEW JOB AS SOON AS POSSIBLE¹⁾

By LIEUTENANT COLONEL RONALD L. PAXSON

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UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
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AIR WAR COLLEGE

AIR UNIVERSITY

TAKING HOLD OF YOUR NEW JOB AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

BY

RONALD L. PAXSON
Lieutenant Colonel, USAF

A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY

IN

FULFILLMENT OF THE RESEARCH REQUIREMENT

RESEARCH ADVISOR: Dr Robert F. Powers

MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA

April 1985

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AIR WAR COLLEGE RESEARCH REPORT ABSTRACT

TITLE: Taking Hold of Your New Job As Soon As Possible

AUTHOR: Ronald L. Paxson, Lieutenant Colonel, USAF

There seems to be a lack of publications that specifically focuses on different techniques, things to do and things to be sensitive to that will enable the individual to learn the new job as soon as possible. The Air Force has published a number of "How To Do It" books, but each deals with a specific job, e.g. How to be a Commander, How to be Safety Officer, etc. With the number of job changes that occurs each year in the Air Force coupled with the relatively short period of time on station (18 months to 36 months), before the next change, it is important to the individual, the organization and the Air Force that the person understands his/her job as quickly as possible. That person could be headed for their first assignment or a cross-training assignment or a high visibility job where time management is paramount, predecessor overlap is nil and success is directly proportional to how quickly you can perform effectively in the position. A collection of such information is provided.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Lieutenant Colonel Ronald L. Paxson has been in the communications - electronics career field for the last 18 years. He has served at both the field level and major command levels. He has been responsible for organizational elements numbering in excess of 250 people. He has also served as a commander, deputy commander and headquarters action officer. He is a graduate of Squadron Officer School and the Air War College, Class of 1985.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

An inherent part of a career in the United States Air force is the frequency of job changes an individual will make over the course of a 20-year career. Within the Air Force officer ranks in a peacetime environment there are approximately 11,000 operational permanent changes of station moves each year. Each of these means a new job in a new environment with different and probably more extensive responsibilities. Add to this number the job changes that occur each year where the individual remains in the same organization or is transferred to a new organization in the same geographical area and you have a sizeable yearly turnover of personnel. (My own personal experience entails 11 job changes in the former category and two job changes in the latter in 18 years.) Additionally, prescribed Air Force manning levels, mission requirements and personnel needs often preclude or severely shorten any overlap between departing and arriving personnel. These conditions offer the opportunity for frequent breaks in continuity of leadership at all management levels throughout the Air Force.

Regardless of the rank, those first few weeks on the

new job are absolutely critical to the individual and the Air Force. Much has been written about the importance of making a good first impression. Professionally speaking that good impression must occur with superiors and subordinates alike. A good impression allows you to move immediately forward while a bad impression incurs a recovery period (lost time) before you can start moving forward.

Each new job is an opportunity to succeed or fail in enhancing the unit's effectiveness. Key to succeeding is becoming a positive contributor to the fulfillment of the activities' mission as soon as possible. In the new job, the opportunity to make decisions will occur after the second or third week if not sooner, and the individual will want to start making the right decisions as quickly as possible and not have to keep deferring due to newness on the job or overall inexperience. The individual must step in and maintain the momentum of leadership and management that will enable the organizational element to continue to grow and not slip into a posture of maintaining the status quo or worse yet to become less productive or efficient. To do this the person must quickly acquire the mission perspective, understand the organization and its interaction with other organizations and understand the human relationships involved. The larger the organization and the more dynamic the environment, the more difficult it will be to get settled into the new job quickly. The longer this takes,

the more difficult it becomes for the individual to assist the unit in reaching its goals.

What has been written that focuses on making yourself productive as quickly as possible in the new job? I have been able to find very little written with that as the thesis statement. I had spent several years in the Air Force before I gave the topic much consideration. With each new assignment I reported in and let day to day events shape my understanding of the new job. Then one day I received an assignment notification to a job that had a history of a high turnover rate. Although the reason for change varied, the central underlying theme was an inability to establish oneself quickly. I began looking for written publications that discussed different techniques for learning the new job quickly. With the number of job changes that are made within the Department of Defense each year and within the total government structure with each new administration, I thought I would find countless publications. I did not. Using the resources of the Air University Library at Maxwell Force Base, I was able to find only one book and no periodicals on the subject.

The Air Force has produced a number of "How To Do It" publications in various forms. Each deals with a specific job, for example, How to be a Commander, How to be a Safety Officer, How to be a Personnel Officer, etc. The Air Force also has the sponsor program for personnel reporting

to a new unit. The program encompasses various subjects but usually focuses on community type information and making the family unit's move to a new city and environment as easy as possible. What I did not find was publications that discuss different approaches to learning your new job as quickly as possible regardless of the job, level of assignment, or breadth of responsibility. Such a book would contain information and tips that individuals could use to conceptually outline a plan for understanding the "tough job" in minimum time. It would be a book for the individual who wants to or, out of necessity, needs to report to his next assignment already running.

I think such a publication has application at all officer levels. The "tough job" means different things to different people. It could be the second lieutenant's first job, the major's next job that he hopes is the spring board to an early promotion, a cross training assignment into a new career field, a career broadening assignment, or a move into the maintenance field after years in the operational field. The job environment may be somewhat low key, but then too it could also be very dynamic where time management is paramount, predecessor overlap is nil and one's success is directly proportional to how quickly one can perform effectively in the new position. Where do you start, and once determined, what do you do next?

The objective of my research was to compile tips,

techniques, and ideas a person could use to formulate a plan of attack and thus serve the Air Force better by knowing how to learn a new job and assess the environment around it as quickly as possible.

Because I could not find books that dealt specifically with this topic, I extracted information that I felt was appropriate from various books based on my Air Force experiences with job changes.

For ease of understanding and formulating a plan of attack, I have organized the material in the following manner: (1) what to do once you know what your next job is, (2) breaking yourself in during the early days, (3) taking hold of the new job, and (4) measuring how you are doing.

CHAPTER II

WHAT TO DO ONCE YOU KNOW WHAT YOUR NEXT JOB IS

Congratulations! You just received your orders for your next assignment. With it comes feelings of excitement and anticipation. You are headed to a new job in a new organization and in a new area. The change offers the opportunities of making new friends, experiencing new situations and confronting new challenges. CHALLENGES! The thought may generate feelings of apprehension. Change, even positive change, produces a certain amount of instability. You are comfortable with your present job. You have established yourself within the organization, and you know your way around. You know what to expect from those who work for you and from your superiors. You say to yourself, "This feeling did not happen overnight, it took time." In all probability the getting comfortable process took a lot of time. You may have even let the process shape itself through day to day events. This often has the individual reacting to events rather than being an initiator of action. The new job, how hard is it? How long before you feel comfortable in it and you can help the organization meet its responsibilities?

Everybody wants to make a good first impression and start off right, but many people do not begin thinking about how to go about it until they report to their new

organization. Unfortunately, it may be too late by then. If it is a fast paced environment, you may get tired before you get organized and become productive. Even if it is not a dynamic environment, you will want to become an integral part of the organization as soon as possible. The time to start laying the ground work toward that end is the day you are notified of your next job. You want to maintain control of that feeling of apprehension by learning all you can about the new job and the surrounding environment before you get there. You also want to arrive at the new job postured to focus your total concentration on the job itself.

Plan a Smooth Transition

In planning a smooth transition the first thing to do is identify all the tasks that must be taken care of at your present location and your next location. Next try to identify any items that will need your attention during your first three months at the new job. Those that can be taken care of before you report to your next job add to your initial list. This list should include professional tasks as well as personal needs. Everything that can be done should be done before you report to your next unit.

Your new activity will be eager to help you get settled during the transition period. The unit will also probably feel a sense of responsibility to you to give you time-off to take care of things after you report if it is

necessary, but you do not want to count on it. Save that time for the emergencies that could not be foreseen nor precluded. As a responsible adult, it is your responsibility to get your personal affairs in order as much as possible so you can focus your full attention on the new job. You do not want to keep interrupting your break-in period with dental appointments, getting automobiles repaired, visiting with the children's teachers, repairing the house, straightening out credit accounts that have gone astray, etc.

Once you have compiled the list, try and accomplish as many things as you can at your present location. You are already settled into a routine there and have better control over the use of your time there than you will have during the first two or three months at your new location.

The list of things to do will vary with people and their personal circumstances. The following examples are the more common possibilities and should be used as mind joggers to help you think of every conceivable item that might pertain to your particular situation.

Obligations to the Old Job

Identify those projects and tasks that can be completed before you depart and get them done. Be extremely thorough in completing the projects. Try to anticipate any questions that may come up after you leave and provide

the answers in some permanent form. If possible, let someone else review the information to see if it requires amplification. Colleagues rapidly become voices in the past if they have to take a supposedly finished project and perform at the superman level to complete it after your departure.

Projects that can not be completed should be worked to a transition point that makes it easy to transfer the project to another individual. Thoroughly cover the project with the individual and leave copius notes behind so the new project officer will have no problems. Trying to work the problem over the telephone from your new location becomes a frustrating experience for both parties and a distraction to the job at hand for you.

Appearance

Take a look at your uniforms. Are they faded, worn or just plain tired? The people around you now may not notice because when you arrived everything was new and sparkling. You have now established yourself and your reputation among those around you speaks louder than your appearance. That will not be the case at your new assignment. A passing grade is not the way to start. Go for the "A", and make your uniform wardrobe professional looking in every respect.

Personal Affairs

This area offers the greatest potential for distracting the individual during the break-in period of the new job if the transition is not planned with care and foresight. Personal affairs is just about all encompassing ranging from finances to health to automobiles to the family unit.

Before leaving an area you want all your financial obligations in good order. It is much easier to straighten things out face to face than over the telephone or through the mail. Make sure that your pay will not be interrupted during the course of the move. Check your local credit rating to be certain no business has lodged any unfavorable credit information against you with the credit bureau. If they have, correct the discrepancy or at least come to an understanding with the creditor before you depart. Insure all creditors have your forwarding address to preclude any bills from going unpaid resulting in an unfavorable credit notation against you after you have departed the area.

Any vehicle used for transportation needs to be in a dependable condition to get you to your new destination and to and from work after you arrive. Take care of vehicle registration and new driving liscense if they are needed before you go to work. Along those same lines, if you know you have some medical or dental appointments coming up take care of them at your present location.

When making a move, your family's happiness and

well-being is a major concern. Work toward making them as self-sufficient as possible prior to starting the new job. If you have the opportunity, visit the new area before you move, preferably with your spouse, regardless if you plan to buy or rent, your new organization represents a wealth of knowledge about the area, so use it.

See first hand what is available in the area that blends with your family's personality. Where are the schools? What school and city transportation facilities are available? Where will you be working? Finally, do not forget the family support areas (recreation facilities, play grounds, day care centers, convenience shopping, banking facilities, etc.).

Before you settle on an area, find out what the city planners have planned for the area during the next few years. There could be some surprises, either positive or negative. Once you have decided on the area, work on making the family as self-sufficient in the area as you can. Get them comfortable moving about the area by themselves. They should know and have traveled the easiest route from home to the air force base, to your work area, to the shopping center, to the grocery store, to the garage to get the car repaired, to the recreation areas, etc. The quicker they become comfortable, the happier they will be, and the easier you will find it to give your full attention to the job.

Study the Environment

Before you leave your present duty station, learn as much as you can about your new job and the environment around it. (3,35) Talk with the person you are replacing. Find out what units and missions you support, who will you interact with, is there a vocabulary or strict paper processing procedures that goes with the job that you can start learning now, and the length of a typical work day. Talk with other people you know, if any, that are either there or have been there.

Establish quickly and maintain a dialogue with your gaining activity. Create a mental picture of your job, the organization and the political climate that is as vivid as possible. Review organization charts to include the activity you are going to as well as your activity's relationship with other organizations. Ask to be sent copies of policy letters and other literature such as operating instructions and the last four quarterly history reports. This is the type of information that many people will spend the first few days on the job reviewing. Having already reviewed this information, your first day on the job will be more meaningful to you. Also, you are better prepared to ask intelligent questions about things you may not understand during your initial conversation with supervisors and subordinates alike. If nothing else you will be able to converse with people and leave the impression you have some idea of

what the unit is doing even if it is your first day. (3, 33)

Another idea that might be of benefit is to review the names and positions of superiors, colleagues and first line subordinates. This will enable quicker recall of their names and where they are in the organization before that initial meeting. It certainly reinforces the information after the meeting.

Formulate a Game Plan

In formulating a game plan, you sensitize yourself in advance to those things you want to accomplish, review or be conscious of when you encounter them during your break-in period. You basically review in your mind the process you are going to go through, the information you want to collect, and the areas you want to assess and evaluate that will enable you to grasp the job as soon as possible. In other words, you want to be organized upon your arrival and know how you are going to conduct your business. Ten to 14 weeks later you do not want to have the feeling that there is not enough time to do it all, the stacks of paper keep multiplying, there are constant interruptions, incompetency surrounds you and you are no longer in control. Start out by setting the tone and maintaining the initiative, and you will not find yourself in this syndrome. Your game plan might even be of benefit to your gaining activity in structuring any orientation program they might be developing for

your arrival. The different aspects of a game plan will be discussed in the next chapter.

Preparing Your Family and Yourself

First, start preparing the family for a change in lifestyle during your initial weeks on the job. If you are going to learn your job as quickly as possible you will not be working eight and nine hour days. That is why you take great care to get them settled and comfortable and able to operate somewhat independently. Those first few weeks on the job will consist of some long, hard hours. Prepare the family now and they will be able to accept it and adapt when the time comes. Second, prepare yourself. It is not going to be easy, but it will be worth it. Start motivating yourself. Before you arrive start imagining how energetic you are going to be. Review how you are going to learn your new job. Imagine each step of the process. Visualize signing-in and knowing exactly what you want to do first. Think how good a feeling it is when superiors and subordinates say you are a worker, a dynamic person with the energy of ten people. Get yourself excited! You are going to grasp your new job and be producing quicker than anyone else has done before you.

CHAPTER III

THE EARLY DAYS

When assuming office for the first time, the honeymoon period for politicians is said to be about 100 days. (5,100) By then they are expected to be organized and have their goals well defined. This is true also of the military manager, but the person is not often given the luxury of a 100 day grace period by superiors or subordinates. If you get three or four weeks before you are expected to make key decisions or be in the front office with recommendations, you are lucky. You must accustom yourself to the new setting, learn the operation, make decisions and recommendations and introduce new ideas in a short period of time. That is why it is important to seize the initiative upon your arrival. You do not have time to let the problems come to you. Set a fast pace. It is easier to slow down later than it is to speed up.

Past performance will not allow you to simply show up and be successful at your new job. You have to prove yourself again by showing you have the capability and willingness to expend the time and effort it takes to make your area of responsibility a success. (3, 75) Today you are expected to spend whatever time is necessary to get the job done. Superiors expect it of you and so will your professional subordinates.

Establish an invigorating work climate by being quick and decisive. (3, 76) Challenge those around you to keep up. When you first arrive, subordinates will be watching to see what kind of initiative you have. Do not disappoint them. This is why it is important to be organized and arrive with a plan of attack in mind. Running fast is great, but if it is in a circle, you only end up where you started. You want to make the most of the expended time and energy. You will be exposing yourself to so many things your conscious mind will not be able to pick everything out. That is why you should identify the information you are looking for and review it to implant it in your subconscious. Then, when it surfaces your subconscious will call it to your attention so you do not miss the opportunity to receive the information.

General Tips

Make every minute count. This requires organization, self-discipline and knowing what you want to accomplish. Do not get caught waiting. How often have you gone to the boss' office and spent 15 to 20 minutes in the outer office waiting for a number of possible reasons. How about meetings? How many have you attended that started 15 minutes late? Always carry some work with you when you are out of the office. This is an excellent opportunity to get some of the reading done that is necessary with almost all

desk jobs. Author and businessman George Halsey identified four common practices that do not contribute to making every minute count: (1) Doing nothing. (2) Doing things that do not contribute in anyway to the fulfillment of the activities objectives. (3) Doing the right things but in a haphazard or unplanned manner. (4) Doing tasks that should be delegated to others. (9, 123)

Get an early start on the day and plan to work late. (7, 141) Do not go in hoping to leave with everyone else. If you do, chances are you will be leaving shortly after they depart. When you know your job, your day will be full. When you are new on the job, you are going to have to work extra hours if you hope to fulfill your responsibilities as soon as possible. If you are willing to expend the effort to come in early, then be thorough in planning your day in advance. Even if you have to make adjustments during the course of the day, you enhance your chances of gaining maximum return from your invested hours. Also, when you are working late, walk around the complex and see who else makes late hours a habit. Chances are those people are close to the heart of their respective organizations and will be excellent sources of information. Get to know those people and you will be in a better position to stay abreast of developments that might impact your organization before the impact is felt. Also it seems, more times than not, that if the day is going to get hectic, it does so at quitting time.

When that happens it is always nice to know what people are normally available to help you out rather than wasting time with frantic telephone calls that nobody answers because they have all left.

You have to learn to say no. (11, 12) Distractions of all kinds will present themselves. They may come from associates, subordinates, or home. You may be tempted to succumb to the distraction because you are new on the job and easily swayed by the comment, "Come on, that can wait. You just got here. It will be there tomorrow, and you have two years to take care of it." If the distraction does not support your learning the job quickly game plan, say no.

Get in the notebook habit. Projects, ideas, questions, and a multitude of other items will come up daily that you will want to follow-up on at a later time. If you can write them down immediately you will increase your chances of returning to the subject at a more beneficial time. You can review your notebook daily and work those items into future schedules. This is much better than trying to rely on memory or scraps of assorted paper you have accumulated through the course of a day.

Although one of your key objectives at the beginning is to learn your job quickly, you cannot become pre-occupied with learning to the extent you unnecessarily delay interfacing meaningfully with subordinates. (5, 101) Such a delay could project a lack of interest on your part and

generate uncertainty and anxiety at all levels. The greatest opportunity for cooperativeness will normally occur at the outset of the relationship rather than later on when opinions have been formed. (5, 101).

Another process you will go through will be the appraisal of your new environment in relation to your already established beliefs and philosophy. (8, 50) When you find objectives, beliefs, standards, etc., that are consistent with your own, reinforce them immediately to save time and provide guidance on what you expect and will support in the future. (8, 51)

Many times politicians have received unwanted attention for making remarks when they believed they were speaking off-the-record. That sanctuary does not exist in an organizational environment. The act of gossiping has no ground rules. Always be discreet in your off-hand remarks, especially so in the beginning. Until you know the people and the environment, the most innocent comment could prove to be extremely embarrassing. (3, 41)

Listen, listen, listen. You will find out more about what is happening from the informal information system than you will from the formal. (1, 222) When you know what is happening in advance of its occurrence, you can anticipate with forethought rather than act hastily in a manner similiar to the reflex action of a crossed leg when the knee is lightly tapped. With early awareness you can prepare

arguments for or against the proposed action or have alternatives available to present rather than losing by default because you were caught by surprise.

Finally, you will need to understand your superiors as much as you need to understand the people working for you. Often you will find yourself in the role of the acrobat. You will be the balancing act relating between upper management and your subordinates. You will have to be responsible to both and facilitate an understanding when the two groups are at opposite viewpoints. You are caught in the middle because you cannot afford to lose the support of either. To do this you need to understand your superiors' goals, priorities, and perspectives. (1, 226)

Assessing Subordinates

Very early, if not the first day, you will have a tour of the facilities that are under your control. Make the most of this tour. Do not write it off as an introductory affair and plan on returning for a more in-depth look. It maybe four weeks before you get another chance. Be relaxed but have all your senses fully alert to absorb as much information as possible about the people and the surroundings. Do not dominate the conversation and do not start solving problems by citing the way it was done from where you just came. (3, 34) Converse but spend most of your time receiving information.

Use this time to collect information that will help you assess your subordinates. You already know their names and where they appear on the organizational chart. Start learning the detail of their jobs, their personalities, and their traits. (3, 48) The tour is a first look analysis, so keep an open mind as you receive information, and use this information to cultivate a more in-depth look as time goes on.

The following are some possible clues to help you with the quick look. (11, 184) People like to talk about things that matter to them. They may talk about other people, past achievements, charity functions, goals in life, sports, etc. These are all clues to their personality. You should be taking mental notes Are there any plaques, degrees or momentos on the walls of their work area? What about any reading material that may be in the area? Are the people expanding their horizon, reading professionally or just reading for relaxation? What is the appearance of the people and their work area? These are all clues. Their manner of speaking may suggest something about their personality. Careful work structure implies education and thoughtful logic. Careless speech suggests careless habits of thinking. The in-depth assessment of employees will occur with time. First though you must understand the scope of each person's work assignment. (5, 99) This entails what he does, who he must work with, and the approximate

percent of time he devotes to each major task. Knowing this you can then decide through face to face meetings, observation and follow-through the initiative and competence of those working for you. (3, 49) Periodic meetings with all first line supervisors is important. You will want to encourage discussions relating to issues where the individual's work assignments affect others outside his span of control. This is a synergistic opportunity for you and others to learn the interrelationships of the organization. (5, 100) Most important, be consistent with your policy and guidance. This will foster confidence building in subordinates and will much to do overcome disharmony if your style is not in phase with your predecessor's. (5, 100)

The Organization's Personality

The organization's personality is something that develops over time and will not change abruptly even with the rotation of key personnel. This is due to the fact that all key personnel seldom leave at the same time, and that the other organizations that your organization interacts with will also shape that personality. Nevertheless, you need to quickly understand it because it may not be congruent with your personal style of doing business. Consequently, you may want to modify your style until you are in a better position to influence its personality.

Although you will not find the organizations' per-

sonality spelled out in writing, you might find some clues to what it is in the manner that policy letters and local operating instructions are written. That personality determines how the organization reacts to day-to-day situations. It shapes how people behave (their values, beliefs and attitudes) when they are performing tasks that are important to the organization. (8, 108) What risks are the organization willing to take? This might vary in terms of the situation or subject area, but it will affect the decision making process. Is the decision made at the first level of supervision or is it elevated up three levels? How much time should be devoted to a task? Is the organization interested in just getting the job done or in getting the job done with 100 percent perfection? How are people viewed? Are they the prime attention getter or is the technical problem associated with achieving the objective the prime consideration? (8, 109) The work climate could vary from ruthless to indifference to paternalism to people. (8, 110) Are family or community relations stressed at all? There are many variables that could shape the personality. What is important is that you understand what they are because whatever they are will influence the decision making process. (8, 108)

Entangling Alliances

You have reviewed the formal organization structure

and understand that, but now you need to become aware of what is below the surface of that structure. Is the internal power structure of the organization really as it appears on the organizational chart? What tensions, conflicts of interests, frustrations or self-serving objectives might exist below the surface? Until you know this you will want to move carefully. Initially make friends on a broad basis and move slowly in identifying with individuals or groups of peers. (3, 50) You never know when those initial friends may have their own self-interest in mind. If you have to make an important decision or recommendation early, base it on how you view the facts and your professional opinion. Do not let generalities, emotions, friendships or politics influence your judgment. Do not make your decision on impulse or arrive at a conclusion using incomplete information. (3 ,45)

Understand Your Predecessor

It is important that you have some understanding of the person you replaced. What did the person do that was right and what was done that was wrong. (7, 141) After all, he probably did influence his area, and how he did it may influence how quickly or how slowly you implement your own style and initiatives. (1,223) Based on previous experience with others in that job, co-workers and subordinates may have their own perceptions about how a person

should act in that job. If your methods do induce a reaction from them you would be in a better position to understand that reaction or anticipate it if you knew that you were deviating from a previously established pattern.

Suppose the person you replaced did not delegate. You arrive and in your enthusiasm to learn your new job quickly you delegate tasks that you know are not part of your job. Your action could be interpreted three ways by subordinates and two of those are not in your best interest. (5, 94) First, it could be recognized as the correct thing to do and accepted. Second, it could be resisted due to the natural phenomena of people resisting change. Lastly, it could be viewed as your unwillingness to accept all aspects of your job. For some those tasks may always have been at your level, and now you are pushing them off on somebody else.

For another example, let us assume your predecessor was thought very highly of by those that worked for him. You are already starting out at a disadvantage because they know no one can equal him. You certainly do not want to begin by modifying or deleting any initiatives that are identified with the person you replaced. The staff will resist you. In this environment you need to know what you are up against and cultivate your predecessor's support so that you can capitalize on the strong cohesion that already exists. (1, 224). You start by identifying the power cen-

ters and anticipating their being defensive. You will be more successful if you work with each on a one on one basis. You must understand their philosophy and what they pride themselves on. With this understanding you will be in a better position to align yourself with them. Without this alliance it will almost be impossible to effect significant changes. (1, 225)

If you believe you have just boarded a sinking ship, you need to quickly identify the cause. How much was your predecessor at fault or were there other contributing factors such as personality clashes, upper management biases, unrealistic goals, inexperience, etc? You will receive advice and information from everyone but do not draw any conclusions until you develop your own convictions. (1, 225) Once you have identified the problem areas (it is rare that you will find only one), you will not want to start correcting them rapidly. The people will need time to adjust and understand what your objectives are. Even then some will be eager to follow and others will have a pessimistic outlook. Although the activity may be viewed as unsuccessful as a whole, some people will feel they have done a good job and will feel threatened by your flurry of activity to get things corrected right now. You will have to discuss with them the problems as you see them and how you want to overcome them. (1, 225) If they have been doing business in the absence of a strong manager and

leader, the sudden appearance of one may be extremely disruptive. They may be reluctant to change the way they have been doing business because they do not see the need to change. They were doing fine; it was the boss who had the wrong approach.

You will need to communicate your strategy to superiors so they know what you want to do and when you plan to achieve it. That way they know when to anticipate improvements and can look for them. If they do not know your plan, they might be looking in the wrong area or at the wrong time and start second guessing your effort.

(1, 226)

Your Position in the Organization

Understanding your role in the organization is extremely important. Auren Uris defines three categories of work: organization-dictated, job-dictated and self-dictated. (12, 9) The first pertains to the things you do that interface you with other people within and outside your organization. Job-dicated are those things you do to get your own work accomplished. Self-dictated is what you voluntarily undertake to satisfy your own personal desires. Read your job description carefully several times. What are the most important aspects of your job? What is the relative emphasis you are going to give to each category?

Talk with your boss. His opinion of your performance

is going to be the most critical to your success, if not the most meaningful. (2, 33) He will probably form that opinion from direct contact as well as feedback from other sources. What does he expect? What are his goals and objectives? What does he define as success? You need to understand his needs and those you can fulfill from your position. Many will probably be generated from organization-dictated work. (2, 33) What is his total area of responsibility? What type of information does he need (work progress, status of problems, suggestions, emergency situations, etc.)? How does he prefer to communicate (face to face, telephone, written memo, detailed information, etc)? What are his standards (quality versus quantity, strict observance of deadlines, concern over details, caution versus daring, etc.)?

Look at the organization. Determine the interrelationship among all elements of the organization. (10, 4) What is each expected to do and why is it important? Assess the relative importance of the different elements. Look at the interrelationship of your organization with other organizations. Which ones are important to accomplishing your unit's goals?

Whose cooperation is essential to your success? (2, 54) This could be people within your organization or outside of your organization. What are their problems, objectives, and needs? Consider these before you start ini-

tiatives that may adversely impact them.

Understanding your position in the organization will help you evaluate what you need to accomplish to be successful, the latitude and resources you have to accomplish your goals and the people you have to interact with and influence.

Establish Your Authority

Hannibal, the great Carthaginian general, on learning that the Roman army he faced was commanded by two generals with joint responsibility for the conduct of the coming battle, observed that Carthage could not lose. He said, "I have greater fear of one mediocre general who has complete charge of a battle than of two great generals who share authority." (3, 47)

You have to establish your authority quickly. Just because you are new you can not allow your second in charge to oversee things too long. To vacillate back and forth between the two of you or to stay in the background too long may be viewed as a sign of weakness or lack of initiative. (3, 47)

You can expect someone to challenge you early. It might be a subordinate or it might be a fellow officer elsewhere in the organization. The problem could stem from a change you have made. Many people resist change and some will display this resistance by non-cooperation. They may

do this overtly or covertly. (3, 74) In either case you must make it understood that you are willing to listen to suggestions and ideas, but when the decision is made, you require everyone to support it to make it work. (3, 74)

There is always someone waiting for the new person to take over in order to sponsor an idea or project that was rejected by the departing individual. Being pushed into a decision is not establishing your authority. Do not feel compelled to make a decision until you understand the complexities, objectives, personalities involved, competence of subordinates and the impact on other elements in the organization. (3, 65) Remember though, there is a difference between studying the problem and simply looking at it for a long time hoping it will go away or somebody will tell you the answer. (3, 48)

Decisions can usually be made correctly with 70 to 80 percent of the known information. This does not mean you can take unnecessary chances, but at the same time, unless you believe that remaining 20 to 30 percent of information will change your mind, go ahead and make your decision. (2, 120)

CHAPTER IV

TAKING HOLD

During the early days you concentrated on collecting as much information as possible about the job and the environment around it. The information gathering process is not over yet; it never is. Some information you may have to re-learn, and some will undoubtedly be totally new to you. So you want to keep your collection senses keen and always turned-on. However, now is the time to firmly grasp hold of the new job and start making good things happen. Your dynamic approach to learning your new job has everybody's attention. Maintain your momentum, get involved with the daily routine, and concentrate on doing those things that enhance mission fulfillment. There are a few other items that are inherent with the daily routine. Most management jobs require reading and handling paper. The amount of written material, such as professional journals, technical publications, reports, messages, letters and staff proposals, that flows across desks on a given day is staggering. Add to this, meetings, telephone calls, visitors, interruptions, correspondence to write, counselling sessions, etc. and you can lose your momentum in a hurry. An important part of taking hold of your new job is knowing how to work efficiently. You have to make every minute count and not let yourself become a casualty to executive burn-out.

Clarify Your Objectives

Clarify your objectives and prioritize them as soon as practical. (3, 71) You have had time to determine your boss' objectives and those of the organization. You want to establish your own now. Some you will want to tailor to support your superiors' objectives and some will probably be your own initiatives. You will want to blend together your short term and long term goals. This will insure that you have sustaining power and can maintain the momentum as you establish yourself in the organization. (3, 71)

Develop a frank relationship with your chief subordinate. (3, 73) Outline your objectives and ask for his recommendations on achieving them. What is his opinion of them? What difficulties will you encounter in trying to reach them? Who else's support in the organization or in the other organizations will be needed?

Once you have decided what you are going to achieve, you need to let your key people know what you want to do, and how you intend to achieve it. Be open to any suggestions the people working for you might have. Also, if you have not already done so, this a good opportunity to let your people know what you expect from them. They need to know what type of information you need to make decisions, how you intend to operate, what your standards are, what your priorities are, what you expect them to do, and what you do not expect them to do. Let them know you need their

help, and you are willing to listen. Also let them know there is a time for discussion and fact finding, and there is a time to get the job done once the decision is made. If they know exactly what it is you want done and what you expect, they will spend less time doing what they think you want done and expect.

Main Events

Direct as much of your energy as possible to doing main events. Main events are the things you can do that contribute to fulfilling your mission. (4, 22) These should be apparent in your job description. Main events enable you to clarify what it is you do that is important. (4, 23) You should also be able to see the relative importance of each one. This is something you should watch continuously. You want to try and eliminate those tasks that prevent you from concentrating on main events. This is especially true if you are doing work that others should be doing. Delegate it. This type of work is a distraction and keeps you from doing what is really important. (4, 24) Another type of work people do that falls into this category is work they find interesting or is fun to do. Do not do it. Again, dedicate your time and energy to accomplishing tasks that fulfill your responsibilities.

Where is the Action

There is an old battlefield axiom, "Keep the initiative". Locate the action, get into the mainstream, and stay on the move.

If you read your subordinates' job descriptions you already have a hint where the action is. Read your supervisor's also if you get a chance. Find out who your subordinates and supervisors interact with, what is important to each and what authority each has. (3, 69) In this context analyze the functions of your area of responsibility. Where are their gaps and overlaps? This type of information will help you identify where your attention needs to be focused. (3, 69)

Once you know where the action is, do not get distracted or start pursuing tangents. Keep your initiative within the framework of your own program. (3, 68)

Establish Your Credibility

Establishing your credibility is a process that takes place over time. If there are people in the organization that already know you, you have a head start, but that will not sustain you for long. You will have to continue to build and reinforce.

Having credibility means being dependable, trustworthy, accessible, trusting, knowledgeable, strong and humble. (1, 229) Keep your promises. Be consistent in making policy and in enforcing it. Live by the rules you

establish for everyone else. Be accessible and provide people the opportunity to discuss any topic with you. In the same vein, visit them on their turf. Let them have the limelight when things are going well, but be there with them when the pressure is on. You are the heat shield that absorbs upper management's heat allowing them to get on with the job at hand. You have to know your job. Your people can help you, but there always comes the time when you have to do the job yourself knowing the right thing to do at the right time. You have to display your trust by allowing your people to wield some power. (1, 229) You cannot be everywhere at once. You have to be able to delegate. They need this experience to grow as much as you do. Finally, you need to be able to laugh at yourself and accept your errors with humility and grace. Everybody makes mistakes and everybody knows that. So why try to hide it?

Follow-up

Following-up on delegated tasks and commitments people have made to you is extremely important when you are new on the job. (3, 81) You cannot take anything for granted. Do not follow-up in an underhanded manner. Be candid. Ask questions about how things are going. Establish suspense dates for people to get back with you. This is an excellent way to get acquainted with your people's ability and find out who needs supervision and who

does not. (3, 81) It is much more difficult to recover from a serious mistake made early in your job than it is to recover once you have established your credibility with your supervisors.

Communication

It is important to establish two-way communication as early as possible since you are new to your people, and they are new to you. It is just as important that they talk with you as it is for you to communicate with them. As early in the first 60 days as possible you should have a personal conversation with each person under you. (2, 13) Let the discussion run open and talk about anything they care to talk about. You want to talk only long enough to keep the conversation open so plan on spending your time listening. Learn as much about the person as possible. Unless the individual introduces a topic seeking your advice, try to refrain from providing advice or solutions to problems. You do not want to inadvertently convey the idea that you are a person with all the answers. (2, 19)

You want to convey a feeling of genuine concern for your people. What do they like to do? What do they feel is important? What are their goals? If they are reluctant to talk on their own, try to get them to expand their point of view. Hopefully, you will be able to convey the idea that they can come and discuss any problem with you. Try and let

the conversation end naturally rather than terminating as if the time is up. People will usually leave feeling more positive about the exchange. (3, 13)

Mentor

Do not hesitate to develop a mentor relationship with a successful person if the situation presents itself. (1, 237) This too is something that must be developed over time. Look for somebody who can provide advice, be used as sounding board or can help you anticipate problems. You should plan on initiating the relationship. You have to be sensitive to the possibility and look for cues that would indicate the individual is interested in your growth as a manager and leader. The mentor could be a person with general all around skills or one that has a very specific talent he is willing to share.

Identify Your First Team

The people working for you will have different levels of ability. Even if you are fortunate to have all good people, some will be better performers than others. Those are the people you will count on the most. How do you identify them? Other people in the organization who have been around awhile will have their opinions as will your chief subordinate. It is okay to listen to what they have to say, but remember it is their opinion. You are the one

that must make the final assessment, and live with it. So you will want to keep an open mind if you receive information from other sources.

When building your first team, you will want to make sure you understand what problems you have to solve and what your objectives are. (3, 73) Knowing that, you then need to find the answers to these questions. (3, 73) Which of my subordinates are competent? Whom can I trust? Are the key jobs filled with people who can do the job and do it in the manner I want it done? Who knows their way around the organization? Who has enthusiasm? Who works whatever hours it takes to get the job done? This process is not designed to exclude people from your team. All your subordinates are members of your team, and you have a responsibility to develop your team into a professional cohesive activity. You cannot do it alone. The first team are those people who are going to help you the most.

Read Expeditiously

With today's information explosion, the volume of reading material that will cross your desk that is either associated with the job or is available to maintain currency in your specialty field is tremendous. If you do not acquire some techniques that allow you to read expeditiously you could soon acquire the feeling that there are just not enough hours in the day to get it all done.

One method is to improve your reading skills and increase your words per minute or simply learn how to skim. There are other techniques that can be used. Be selective in what you read. (13, 76) Read only those publications you would be willing to pay for yourself. Select only those materials that offer the most information for the time consumed. Ask yourself these questions. How often does this publication contain information I use? What could happen if I discontinued this magazine? Another technique is called the read and rip technique. (13, 76) Quickly review the publication, pull out the articles you want to read (xerox the article if the publication must remain intact), and place them in your read folder until a scheduled reading session or carry it with you as a filler while you are getting your hair cut, commuting, or waiting for a meeting to begin. Establish a throw away date for each article and stick to that date read or not. (13, 77)

The Paper Mill

Paper processing can also be a big time consumer if you are not careful. It seems that nothing can happen without first happening on paper, and if you do not keep the paper moving, your chair will soon become your in-box. Also the longer you hold onto a paper that requires others to act, the farther behind they become. Ideally you want to touch each piece for a period of time not to exceed five

minutes, and yield some kind of action when you put it down. This technique has been given the acronym TRAF (toss, refer, act and file). (13, 40)

Business Week says "Man's best friend, aside from the dog, is the wastebasket". (13, 40) Papers that you are reluctant to throw away you should challenge with these questions. Who really needs this information? What is the worst thing that could happen if I throw it away? If you do not come up with any good answers, then toss it.

Refer those papers that contain information that others need or that require others to act. Never spend time trying to understand what the paper is about if you have people with greater knowledge or expertise on that particular subject. If it is important, do not hold onto the paper. Send it on and suspense the gaining office to follow-up with you.

Those papers that require you to act should be set aside for your later action. This is also true of any paper that requires longer than five minutes to read. These should be set aside and reviewed during your scheduled reading period.

File those that must be retained, but be sure you place a discard date on each to preclude retention beyond the date it might be needed.

Shaping Your Workday

Making every minute count is one way to insure there are enough hours in the workday to accomplish what you need to accomplish. It will be hard to do if you are always reacting to events, juggling four projects at once, conducting telephone business at the expense of projects and allowing meetings and interruptions to disrupt periods of concentrated thought. The idea is to harness the time you can control and minimize the impact of what you cannot control. (13, 114)

The first step in shaping your workday is compiling a master list of "to do" items. This list has no boundaries. It may contain items for today, tomorrow, the next day, next week, next month and beyond. (13, 119) What appears in the list is also boundless. It will be tasks for you to do, tasks you will delegate and any ideas or thoughts you want to pursue yourself or with others. An excellent way to compile your list is using the notebook habit that was discussed earlier. An excellent alternative to the notebook is a small tape recorder or dictating machine.

The master list must be reviewed daily, preferably toward the end of the day to facilitate preparation of tomorrow's daily list. Tasks that you were given during the course of day that must be completed the same day should be added to your current day's list as soon as possible. If you are in your office when you receive the tasking, add it then, and do not bother placing it on your master list. When

reviewing your master list, cross out any entries that, after reflection, were just passing fancies. Tasks that are complex or will evolve overtime and have distinct actions should be broken down and entered separately on the master list. Tasks that are delegated should be suspended, if appropriate, and crossed off your list. Action that is required of you and will take place sometime after tomorrow should be placed on your calendar. If the event requires advanced preparation, be sure to identify the start date on your calendar. (There are several different types of desk calendars you can choose from that allow this detail of advanced planning). Those tasks that require immediate action should be added to tomorrow's daily list. These tasks are then crossed off your master list. (13, 119)

Tomorrow's daily list should be compiled at the end of the preceeding day and will come from two sources. Items that were scheduled previously on your calendar and items selected from your master list. These items could have evolved from today's events or be items that you have been debating on or waiting for the opportunity to accomplish or begin. (13, 121)

Your daily list should contain no more than 10 items. (13, 121) To list more might induce a feeling of being overwhelmed. If you discover 10 is not enough, then add to it. These 10 items should be prioritized in some fashion. (13, 126) One suggestion is to categorize them as

a one, two or three. You can assign them numbers one through ten, but only if you can do so without wasting time agonizing if the item is a five or six and so on.

Use common sense and be reasonable in assigning priorities. Let us assume you use the one, two or three method. Your one's should be tasks that are critical, time sensitive, stressful or concentration demanding. As a rule, you will not have the time or mental energy to accomplish more than three or four ones per day. (13, 127) Number two priority tasks would usually equate with the day-to-day substance of the job. (13, 130) The tasks must be done, but you have some flexibility in selecting when they will be completed. Priority three tasks are those that are left-over. They represent the nice-to-do things on that day. Courtesy calls, telephone calls and self-interest reading are some examples.

Work each task through to completion before you start another. (11, 11) If this is not possible, then stop at a natural ending point. Do not be concerned if you do not finish the list. At least you accomplished the most important tasks. At the end of the day transfer those unfinished tasks to the next day's daily list. It is conceivable that a priority two item would change to a priority one. Also, if certain items never seem to get done ask yourself if the item can be delegated or eliminated. (13, 129) If a task seems to return little for the time

expended, ask the following questions:

1. Must the job be done at all? What would happen if it were cut?
2. Can the job be delegated?
3. Is the time expenditure-your own and others-commensurate with the project's importance?
4. If the time expenditure seems excessive, can the task be downscaled: simplified, made less exhaustive, less detailed, etc.? (13, 124)

You may want to keep your daily lists because they serve as an excellent source to show how you spend your time. This information could be used for performance purposes or for a manpower study if the workload is excessive.

Finally, make an appointment with yourself each Friday. (4, 31) Use this time to plan your next week's schedule. Include your secretary in the process so that person knows what your objectives and priorities are. This should also save you time in preparing each day's daily work list.

Scheduling And Allocating Time

Now that you have a method of compiling your daily work list, take a look at a way to schedule your work that might make the best use of your time. If you have ever played golf, you have probably experienced hitting the ball on the sweet spot of the golf club at least once. That is the spot that makes the ball travel the farthest distance with seemingly little effort on your part. The same is true

when you do your hardest tasks at the time you are at your productive best, that time of day when you feel creative, have the most energy and are capable of concentrated thought. This is referred to as your prime time. (13, 131) You may have to experiment a little to determine when your prime time is most likely to occur, but once found, schedule your priority one tasks to be accomplished during your prime time. Three or four hours are usually the total extent of people's prime time. (13, 132) Even if people had the energy to continue on, it is unlikely they would be able to preclude interruptions after three hours of solitude. (13, 132) In all probability even those three hours will be interrupted by somebody. Naturally you would schedule your lower priority tasks for your non-prime time periods.

The Secretary

If you are fortunate enough to have your own secretary you will want to be certain that you do not underutilize this valuable resource. That person is probably an excellent source of historical information and able to explain why things are done the way they are. (12, 264) Keep her informed. If she knows what is going on, she will be in an excellent position to better serve your needs and thus preclude people from interrupting you during your prime-time work period. That person will be able to answer questions on your behalf and refer people to other elements

of the organization when they need assistance. With one twenty minute meeting with the secretary at the start of the day, you can review your priorities, discuss problems, the day's tasks, status of any outstanding work, anticipated events during the course of the day and how the secretary should handle them. (12, 269) All of these will allow the secretary to take care of events that would otherwise be referred to you, thus allowing you to work on more important matters.

CHAPTER V

MEASURING HOW YOU ARE DOING

When you set out to accomplish goals it is important to have some way of knowing how you are doing. This feedback can provide you with a feeling of either self-satisfaction or maybe even a little disappointment because you find out you are not doing as well as you anticipated. In either case you benefit because you should be able to determine what areas need a little more effort to make them better.

Human Relation Factors

Have the people working for you, with you and over you, provided any indications to how you are doing? If resistance to changes you are making is less, you are making progress. (13, 91) If you have been accepted by your peers as an equal, you are moving forward. (3, 95) You can be sure you are doing well if morale has improved, there is greater team pride, people are eager to accept new tasks, subordinates work projects on their own initiatives and volunteer worthwhile ideas to make your suggestions better, and you are getting cooperation rather than mere compliance. (3, 96) Your boss will show his approval by giving you added responsibilities and more latitude to get your job done. Nobody can be successful for long without organiza-

tional respect. If you are seeing the indicators mentioned above you are on your way to being successful at your new job.

Main Events

Have you accidentally fallen into the trap of doing work that does not relate to your job description and is not furthering the fulfillment of your objectives or your superiors? The ten day audit is a way to check your progress. (4, 25) You simply record on paper everything you do and how much time you spend doing it over a ten day period. Record everything such as meetings attended, reports read, journals read, people visited, time spent writing, telephone calls received and made, etc. At the end of each day review the audit and ask yourself these questions. (4, 27) What tasks are main events or linked to main events? Is the amount of time spent doing them proportional to the importance of the event? Is there a better way to do the task? Can any of these tasks be downscaled or eliminated? What tasks are not linked to main events? Why are you doing them? Are they necessary? Can they be eliminated or delegated? Ashleigh Brilliant in Pot Shot 116 offers a humorous example of unnecessary work, "Before burning these papers, let me make sure they are in alphabetical order. (4, 28) You may not have gone this far in wasting your time, but do take a close look at other less

obvious things you might be doing that are not necessary. The audit should show you if you are making the best use of your time and if inappropriate tasks have slipped into your daily routine consuming time that could be spent more productively.

Organizing

How do you feel about how things are going? Do you feel you are staying ahead or are you starting to get bogged down? If it is the latter here are some questions from Stephanie Winston's book, The Organized Executive, that might help you pinpoint the problem areas.

1. When you walk into your office in the morning, do you know what your two or three primary tasks are?
2. Do you usually accomplish those tasks by the end of the day?
3. Do you meet daily with your secretary? Are you keeping her informed?
4. Does your staff usually receive clear-cut assignments that outline the overall purpose and the due date?
5. Are there some papers on your desk, other than reference materials, that you have not looked through for a week or more?
6. Do you receive letters or calls that begin: "You have not gotten back to me yet, so...."?
7. Within the last three months have you forgotten any scheduled appointment or meeting, or any special date that you wanted to acknowledge?
8. Are you harrassed by frequent interruptions-whether phone calls or visitors-that affect your ability to concentrate?

9. Do magazines and newspapers pile up unread?
10. Do you often wind up doing a little of your own staff's jobs in addition to your own?
11. Are you so busy with details that you are ignoring opportunities for new business or promotional opportunities? (13, 23)

If you answered no for any questions one through four and yes for any questions five through eleven, you need to examine those areas and correct any problems there might be before the situation gets out of your control.

Diagnosing Interruptions

Interruptions are a part of the job. There will always be situations that demand an interruption. If you begin sensing that the interruptions are becoming excessive, you need to understand why they are occurring. It could be your management style or it could be driven by organizational breakdowns or lack of guidance. (13, 145)

Again, the log keeping techniques can be used to help you identify why the interruptions are occurring. Keep a log of all telephone and visit interruptions noting who it was, the length of time and the purpose. At the end of the period review the list and categorize each interruption into one of the following: Legitimate, delegable, normal follow-up and staff inquiry. (13, 146) Legitimate interruptions that require immediate decisions or advice that only you can provide are going to occur. Cross those off. The delegable ones your secretary or staff should have handled, so provide

the necessary guidance to preclude these from occurring in the future. The normal interruptions are those unscheduled occurrences where people are taking the opportunity to socialize or seek information that is not really needed at that particular time. How you handle the situation depends on how often it occurs and who the people are. If they are superiors or other influential people, you need to either accept the interruption or handle it with tact. You will be able to sense any urgency and if there is none, a very polite "Sir, do you mind if I get back with you, I need to take care of this matter quickly." Superiors like to see you taking care of business. For others either establish a time limit at the beginning and follow it, allow your secretary to intercept them and turn them away or politely let them know you are busy and you will get back with them when you finish. (13, 143) You can do this without being rude. Most people are understanding because they experience the same thing themselves. Follow-ups are people getting back to you because you still owe them something. You need to examine why you are not getting the work out. The staff inquiries may also point in your direction. The staff may be afraid to make decisions without your okay, or you may not be providing sufficient guidance if they are continually seeking clarification, advice, or information. (13, 147)

Self-Analysis

Finally, in assessing how you are doing you need to be honest with yourself and those around you. You know when you only put 80 percent of your available talent into a job. Do not try to rationalize less than acceptable performance or fix the blame elsewhere. Recognize your mistakes, and profit from the experience. (2, 117) Keeping logs is of no value unless you are willing to make an honest self-analysis of the information.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

"Duty" said Robert E. Lee, "is the most sublime word in the English language". (3, 128) As an Air Force officer you will be called upon to perform your duty around the globe in different environments and at different organizational levels. As a professional you will want to give each job your best effort. Regardless if the environment you find yourself in is dynamic or one of slower pace, you will want to be recognized as an integral part of your organization as quickly as possible. Not only does this provide us a feeling of self-satisfaction, but it is also necessary if you are going to help the unit accomplish its goals.

In the preceding chapters we looked at a myraid of things to do and to be sensitive to that would let you arrive at the next assignment ready to give your full attention to the job in order that you could discharge your responsibilities effectively and efficiently as soon as possible. The game plan we developed to accomplish that goal had four phases: what to do once you know what your next job is, (2) breaking yourself in during the early days, (3) taking hold of the new job, and (4) measuring how you are doing.

Once you know what your next job is you want to learn as much about the job as you can before you sign-in and to place yourself in a position that allows you to focus

your full attention on the job the day you report. Learning about the job and the environment around it allows you the opportunity to formulate a plan of attack for becoming comfortable in the job. Taking care of all your professional and family commitments before you report will eliminate the opportunity for distractions during the learning period.

Chapter III discussed the early days on the job. You might think of the early days as the break-in period. You get your first look, up close and personal, to coin a sports phrase used by the American Broadcasting Corporation, at your job, your organization, the environment and the people above and below you. You will need to maintain the initiative, know what you are looking for and make every minute count if you are going to assimilate all the information needed to learn the operation, make decisions and recommendations, and introduce new ideas in a short period of time.

Now that you understand the organization, you are ready to move your activity forward, slowly at first but ever forward. Take hold of your job by identifying what you want to accomplish, to what you have to concentrate on, and insuring you have enough time in the day to do it all.

As you move through each succeeding day you need to be able to assess how you are doing. Are things working smoothly or does one or two parts need a little oil or maybe even a major overhaul in one particular area? There are

indicators you can look for in determining the cohesiveness of your team and its mental outlook as well as assessing your own daily effort. Chapter V can be extremely helpful if you start feeling frustrated because there does not seem to be enough time in each day to do all the things you are trying to do.

Much of what has been covered seems at first glance to be common sense and easily recognized as the only right thing to do. This is a correct assessment in a library reading environment. However, if the ideas discussed are not well ingrained, they are easy to lose sight of in a dynamic and hectic work climate.

Finally the ideas discussed are not all inconclusive and will not necessarily be applicable in each job. To what extent individuals would concern themselves with the ideas expressed would depend on the job itself and the individual's strengths, weaknesses, background and experience level.

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